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AN OVERVIEW OF THE IDEA OF A PRESSURE GROUP

A pressure group is a formal or organised body with a common interest whose fundamental aim is to put pressure on any government institution with the goal of influencing government policies and laws to its own advantage. They promote their interests regarding an issue as it seems to influence government decisions and politics.

The pressure group is referred to as The Functional Representative. This is the idea that various pressure groups represent different sectors of the society based on their functions. According to Anifowose (1999), pressure group is described as interest groups, lobby groups or even forest groups. They came into existence to complement, change or even to protect the interests of their members or groups. What pressure groups seek to achieve is to ensure the government does their bidding. These groups influence both public policy, administration, and even go a long way to determine political structures of the society and forms of government.

Some examples of pressure groups in Nigeria are: ASUU (Academic Staff Union for Universities), Afenifere, Oodua People's Congress, Areas Consultative Forum, Nigeria Bar Association of Nigeria (NBA), Chirstain Association of Nigeria (CAN), Nigerian Labour congress (NLC).

Pressure groups exist to checkmate and make democracy better, to compensate for tyranny of majority of people in the society.

TYPES OF PRESURE GROUPS

There are 5 types of pressure groups:

1. Interest Groups: Sectional groups which represent the people in the society. Eg CBI (Confederation of British Industry) known as voice of business in the country.
2. Cause Groups: Promotion groups which seek to promote particular causes. Examples are charities and environmental groups.
3. Insider Groups and Outsider Groups: insider Groups have regular access to ministers and legislators. Eg NBA (Nigerian Bar Association). Outsider groups have no access to

government and its machineries. An example is the Animal Liberation Front.

4. Anomic Groups: This group have unpredictable actions and behaviours as the work based on the moment and situation in the society.
5. Associated Groups and Non Associated Groups: Associated Groups are registered with appropriate authorities in a state or country, while non-associated are without formal organisations.

FUNCTIONS OF PRESSURE GROUPS

1. Link's government to the people
2. Promotes participation in government
3. Serving as sources of information to government
4. Promotion of the interest of the minority
5. Influencing legislation.

Pressure Group Lobbying: Pressure groups may adopt a variety of strategies to achieve their goals including lobbying elected officials, media advocacy, and direct political action. The degree to which such groups are able to achieve their goals may depend on their ability to be recognized as legitimate by the population, media and by those in power. For example, civil rights groups, trade unions, and professional associations are more widely recognised than newly formed groups or single issue pressure groups.